



City of San José  
Office of the City Clerk  
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CITY OF SAN JOSÉ

## YOUR GUIDE TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT





ELECTIONS—RUNNING FOR OFFICE

The City of San José operates under the Council/Manager form of government. The City Council, as the legislative body, is empowered by the City Charter to formulate citywide policy that provides overall direction to City administration. Ten Councilmembers are elected by district by city voters to serve four-year terms. The City Charter limits Councilmembers to serving two, consecutive terms.

Voters throughout the City of San José elect the Mayor. The Mayor represents all the people of San José and also has a seat on the City Council. The City Charter limits the Mayor to serve two, four-year terms.

Every even year, the City of San José holds a primary election in June and a runoff election in November. Even districts are held during presidential campaign years (2020,2024). The odd districts and Mayor’s office are elected in the “off” years (2018, 2022). Special elections may be called at any time pursuant to the Elections Code.

Interested candidates should contact the City Clerk’s office before the February of the June election, as the nomination period begins in February and ends in March. See [www.sanjoseca.gov/cityclerk](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/cityclerk) for detailed information.

ELECTIONS— SUPPORTING CANDIDATES

If you’re not ready to run for office yet, but want to support a candidate, please familiarize yourself with the California Fair Political Practices Commissions advice, and read through our campaign reporting requirements in Title 12 of the San José Municipal Code. San José had contribution limits set by the City Council in the fall of every odd numbered year.

**If you are soliciting contributions or performing campaign activities, you MAY need to report under FPPC regulations. It is your duty to be aware what your reporting requirements are. Primarily formed committees to support or oppose local candidates and local ballot measures are subject to Manual 2 from the FPPC. Visit <http://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules.html> for a breakdown of reporting requirements.**

Complaints regarding elections are filed with the City Clerk to be heard by the Board of Fair Campaign and Political Practices. See [www.sanjoseca.gov/cityclerk](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/cityclerk) for more information

COUNCIL AND COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

City Council Meetings are held every Tuesday beginning at 1:30 p.m., and on the first and third Tuesdays beginning at 6 p.m. Most land use items are considered during evening sessions. With a few exceptions as specified by state law, all City Council and Council Committee meetings are open to the public. Council Committee meetings schedules can be found on the web at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=414>.

Agendas, Staff Reports and some associated documents for City Council/Council Committee items may be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/cityclerk>. Council Meetings are televised live and rebroadcast on Channel 26. **To request an accommodation or alternative format under the Americans with Disabilities Act for City-sponsored meetings, events or printed materials, please call (408) 535-1260 or (408) 294-9337 as soon as possible, but at least three business days before the meeting.**

**Parking validation** for the City Hall Parking Garage for those attending Council meetings is available in the Council Chambers.

To submit a public comment on any item scheduled on the agenda to be included in the packet of reports, you may email your comments to [city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov) or mail your comments to 200 E Santa Clara Street ATTN: City Clerk, San José, CA 95113.

You may speak to the City Council/Council Committee about any discussion item on the agenda, and during Open Forum on items that are not on the agenda and are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the City Council. If you wish to speak at a meeting, please refer to the following guidelines:

- **Fill out a Yellow Speaker’s Card and submit it to the City Clerk. Do this before the meeting or before the item is heard.** This will ensure that your name is called for the item(s) that you wish to address, and it will help ensure the meeting runs smoothly for all participants.
- When the Council reaches your item on the agenda, the Mayor/Chair will open the public hearing and call your name. Please address the Council from the podium,.
- Each speaker generally has two minutes to speak per item. The amount of time allotted to speakers may vary at the Mayor’s discretion, depending on the number of speakers or the length of the agenda.

Please be advised that, by law, the City Council /Council Committee is unable to discuss or take action on issues presented during Open Forum. According to State Law (the Brown Act) items must first be noticed on the agenda before any discussion or action. Also, Speakers’ comments should be addressed to the full body. Requests to engage the Mayor, Council Members, Board Members, Commissioners or Staff in conversation will not be honored. Abusive language is inappropriate; Speakers will not bring to the podium any items other than a prepared written statement, writing materials, or objects that have been inspected by security staff.; If an individual wishes to submit written information, he or she may give it to the City Clerk or other administrative staff at the meeting.; Speakers and any other members of the public will not approach the dais at any time without prior consent from the Chair of the meeting.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct which will disturb, disrupt or impede the orderly conduct of the meeting may result in removal from the meeting and/or possible arrest.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

City boards and commissions were established for the purpose of advising the City Council and providing ongoing input into policies and issues affecting the future of the San José community. All persons seeking membership on a board or commission must be San José residents and some commissions have additional membership requirements.

Applicants are appointed by the City Council. Members are usually appointed for a four-year term. All meetings are open to the public and copies of the agendas are available at least 10 days prior to any regularly scheduled meeting. There’s a Board or Commission for almost every civic interest (See partial list below). For a full list, see our application page at: <https://sanjose.granicus.com/boards/>

Airport Commission	Library and Early Education Commission
Arts Commission	Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force
Board of Fair Campaign and Political Practices	Neighborhoods Commission
Civil Service Commission	Parks and Recreation Commis-sion
Council Appointment Advisory Commission	Planning Commission
Historic Landmarks Commis-sion	Retirement Boards
Housing and Community Development Commission	Salary Setting Commission
Human Services Commission	Senior Citizens Commission
	Youth Commission



VOLUNTEERING AND INTERNSHIPS

We love our volunteers and interns! We have volunteer docents who lead tours of City Hall, serve in the parks, at community events and more. Interns sometimes receive college credit (check with your school to see how to earn credit while interning). You can serve as an intern if you are a high school or college student. Every department utilizes interns to do a variety of tasks including answering phones, filing, scanning, copying, completing research projects, designing publications and graphics. We strive to make sure the internship provides students with valuable work skills and educate them in how local government works. **If you’re interested in serving as a volunteer or intern, please contact the department in which you have an interest to inquire.**